

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 IO-14 AID-20 CU-04 PC-04 EUR-25

NIC-01 DRC-01 /177 W

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R 290940Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2041

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOGADISCIO 1020

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OAU PFOR SO

SUBJECT: SOMALI FONSEC'S UNSUCCESSFUL OAU SEC GEN CANDIDACY

REF MOGADISCIO 970

1. SUMMARY: BLACK AFRICANS HERE RESENT WHAT THEY SEE AS SOMALIA'S ACTING AS ARABS' AGENTS IN PUSHING ARTEH'S OAU SEC GEN CANDIDACY. ARABS BETRAY ANNOYANCE AT SOMALI FAILURE DELIVER THE GOODS. SOMALIS PUT SOME OF BLAME FOR THEIR SET-BACK ON WESTERN POWERS. WHOLE EPISODE HAS PROBABLY STRENGTHENED ARGUMENTS OF THOSE WITHIN RULING GROUP WHO SAY SOMALIA CAN ONLY RELY ON UNILATERAL ACTION IN MATTERS SUCH AS SOMALI-ETHIOPIAN DISPUTE. END SUMMARY.

2. KENYAN AND NIGERIAN AMBASSADORS (BOTH OF WHOM WERE MEMBERS OF THEIR COUNTRIES' DELEGATIONS AT RECENT OAU MEETINGS) AND OTHER LOCAL DIPLOMATIC SOURCES HAVE ECHOED ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR AYALEW'S DESCRIPTION (REFTEL) OF SOMALI FONSEC OMAR ARTEH'S
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CANDIDACY FOR OAU SEC GEN AS DETERMINED EFFORT BY ARAB LEAGUE

TO "TAKE OVER" OAU. THERE SEEMS TO BE GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT THIS BELIEF WAS REASON THAT OPPOSITION TO ARTEH HELD FIRM THROUGHOUT SO MANY BALLOTS DESPITE FACT ARTEH HAD MAJORITY OF VOTES.

3. ACCORDING KENYAN (AND PAKISTANI), ARAB LEAGUE MEETING A FEW DAYS BEFORE OAU SESSION DECIDED TO PUSH ARTEH CANDIDACY AS WAY TO BRING OAU ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE UNDER ARAB CONTROL. NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR ASSERTED ARABS' PRINCIPAL AIM WAS TO MAKE OAU TOOL OF THEIR ANTI-ISRAEL AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, ANTI-WESTERN POLICIES. HE ASSERTED FUNDS FOR GSDR SUMMIT EXPENSES CAME FROM ARABS - OTHER SPECIFIED LIBYANS. KENYAN ASSERTED THAT NEXT STEP WOULD HAVE BEEN TO MOVE OAU HEADQUARTERS TO NORTH AFRICA, AND NIGERIAN ASSERTED THAT SOMALI SUPPORT FOR EARLIER EFFORTS TO MOVE HEADQUARTERS OUT OF ADDIS ATTRIBUTED TO OPPOSITION TO ARTEH CANDIDACY. ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR CLAIMS PRINCIPAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ENTIRE MOGADISCIO MEETING WAS THAT OAU AS ORGANIZATION HAD BEEN "SAVED" FROM ARAB TAKEOVER.

4. WHATEVER TRUTH THERE IS IN THESE SPECIFICS -- AND WE TAKE KENYAN ASSERTION THAT ARABS WOULD MOVE OAU HEADQUARTERS TO NORTH AFRICA WITH GRAIN OF SALT -- ALL AMBASSADORS APPEARED TO BE GENUINELY INDIGNANT AT ALLEGED ARAB TAKEOVER ATTEMPT. THEY ALL EXPRESSED FIRM CONVICTION THAT ARAB EFFORTS WOULD CONTINUE. BLACK AFRICA HAD WON A BATTLE BUT NOT THE WAR.

5. SOMALI REACTION TO FAILURE OF ARTEH'S CANDIDACY HAS BEEN ONE OF DISAPPOINTMENT AND RESENTMENT AT THOSE WHOM THEY FEEL ENGINEERED THEIR DEFEAT. SOMALI PRESS HAS CRITICIZED ZAMBIA BY NAME FOR ITS ROLE (SEPTTEL). PRESIDENT SIAD TOLD ME HE FOUND ZAMBIAN ATTITUDE DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND IN VIEW OF SOMALIA'S PAST WILLINGNESS TO GO ALONG WITH DESIRES OF OTHER EAST AFRICAN NATIONS IN SELECTION CANDIDATES FOR OAU AND UN POSITIONS. OTHER PRINCIPAL VILLAIN MENTIONED IN DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES HERE IS NYERERE, WHO ALLEGEDLY TOOK EXTREMELY TOUGH LINE AGAINST ARTEH CANDIDACY AND RALLIED OPPOSITION TO HIM AT CRUCIAL MOMENTS.

6. GSDR OFFICIALS HAVE ALSO CRITICIZED WHAT THEY DESCRIBE AS LOBBYING AGAINST ARTEH BY BRITISH AND ITALIANS. BOTH THESE EMBASSIES HAD DIPLOMATIC OFFICERS (IN BRITISH CASE, THEIR AMBASSADOR) AT MEETING SITE DURING PORTIONS OF THE BALLOTING

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WHICH LASTED UNTIL EARLY MORNING HOURS OF JUNE 15.

7 COMMENT: SOMALIS PROBABLY HAD SEVERAL MOTIVES IN ADVANCING ARTEH CANDIDACY. TO HAVE SOMALI NATIONAL AS OAU SEC GEN WOULD BE FINE FEATHER IN CAP OF ONE OF SMALLER AND POORER AFRICAN NATIONS. IT WOULD GIVE SOMALIS GOOD POSITION FROM WHICH TO REDUCE ETHIOPIAN INFLUENCE IN OAU ORGANIZATION. IT WOULD PLEASE ARABS AND HELP CONVINCE THEM THT SOMALIA IS WORTHWHILE ADDITION

TO THEIR CLUB. IT WOULD PROVIDE GRACEFUL WAY TO EFFECT ARTEH'S REMOVAL, WHICH IS DESIRED BY SEVERAL IMPORTANT FIGURES WITHIN SOMALI HIERARCHY. ARTEH HIMSELF MIGHT HAVE VIEWED THIS AS GOOD WAY OUT OMUNCONFORTABLE PERSONAL POSITION.

8. ASSUMING ARAB STATES DID WISH TO PLACE ONE OF THEIR OWN INTO SECGEN POSITION, ARTEH APPEARS A LOGICAL CANDIDATE. HE IS,AS WE UNDERSTAND, HIGHLY REGARDED WITHIN ARAB WORLD. HE ALSO HAS CONSIDERABLE PERSONAL PRESTIGE IN BLACK AFRICA. SOMALIA IS PROBABLY AS "AFRICAN" AS ANY MEMBER OF ARAB LEAGUE. IT IS NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO RESIST ARAB PRESSURES WITH IMPUNITY. FINALLY, ARABS MAY HAVE FELT SOMALIA'S POSITION AS HOST MIGHT HAVE FACILITATED CANDIDACY OF ITS FONSEC.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MOGADISCIO 1020

9. FAILURE OF ARTEH'S CANDIDACY AND BITTERNESS WHICH IT AROUSED IS SETBACK FOR SOMALIS. IT IS CLEAR THAT MANY AFRICANS, A NUMBER OF WHOM FEEL THAT SOMALIA IS NOT A TRULY "AFRICAN" STATE, ARE ESENTFUL OF SOMALIA'S ROLE AS ARABS' STALKING HORSE. JUDGING

FROM ARAB DIPLOMATIS HERE, THERE IS SOME FEELING AMONG THESE STATES THAT SOMALIS GAVE THEM BAD ADVICE BY SAYING THEY COULD PULL OFF ARTEH'S ELECTION. INTERNALLY, ARTEH'S POSITION IS FURTHER WEAKENED AND, TO EXTENT HIS PRESTIGE ABROAD HAS SUFFERED, ONE OF HIS PRINCIPAL ASSETS IN SOMALI EYES IS REDUCED. FINALLY, BAD TASTE LEFT BY SOMALI CAMPAIGN TACTICS HAVE TARNISHED OTHERWISE GOOD IMPRESSION THEIR EFFORTS IN HOSTING SUMMIT APPEAR TO HAVE MADE.

10. WHILE IT IS TO US ADVANTAGE NOT RPT NOT TO HAVE ARTEH AS OAU SECGEN, THE INCREASED SOMALI FRUSTRATION AND SENSE OF ISOLATION WHICH THIS AFFAIR HAS PROVOKED IS PROBABLY NOT RPT NOT IN OUR INTEREST. SOMALIS WILL SEARCH FOR SCAPEGOATS AND, AS NOTED ABOVE, SOME WESTERN POWERS HAVE ALREADY BEEN FINGERED. WE HAVE CONFIDENTIAL

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NOT HEARD CRITICISM OF US IN THIS CONNECTION, BUT THERE ARE SOME WITHIN SOMALI GOVERNMENT WHO WILL ALWAYS SAY WE ARE AT LEAST PARTLY TO BLAME.

11. TO EXTENT THIS AFFAIR HAS REDUCED GS DR ASSESSMENT OF CHANCES OF GETTING AFRICAN SUPPORT FOR WHAT IT CONSIDERS SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF ETHIOPIAN-SOMALI DISPUTE, IT BOLSTERS ARGUMENTS OF THOSE WITHIN SOMALI RULING GROUP WHO SAY THIS CAN ONLY BE RESOLVED BY MILITARY ACTION. SOMALI ASSESSMENT OF DEGREE OF VIOLENCE OF AFRICAN REACTION TO SUCH A MILITARY MOVE MAY HAVE BEEN INCREASED. HOWEVER, WE QUESTION THAT SOMALIS WOULD FEAR SIGNIFICANT AFRICAN MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ETHIOPIA. WE DOUBT THAT ANTICIPATED AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC REACTION WOULD DETER SOMALIS IF THEY FELT THEY COULD LAUNCH A SUCCESSFUL MILITARY CAMPAIGN. WE ALSO DOUBT THAT SOMALIS WOULD FEEL THAT ARAB DISSATISFACTION WITH THEIR PERFORMANCE IN CONNECTION WITH SEC GEN ELECTION WOULD JEOPARDIZE ARAB SUPPORT FOR SOMALIS IN EVENT OF CONFLICT WITH ETHIOPIA.

12. THUS, WE FEEL NET IMPACT IS TO STRENGTHEN HANDS OF THOSE WHO FEEL SOMALIA MUST TAKE UNILATERAL ACTION TO FURTHER ITS INTERESTS IN MATTERS SUCH AS DISPUTE WITH ETHIOPIA AND DIS- REGARD THE DIPLOMATIC CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH ACTION.
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